

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 09055 01 OF 03 241654Z
ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 NEW DELHI 9055

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IN
SUBJECT: ANNUAL FOREIGN MINISTRY REPORT

SUMMARY. THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS' ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1976-77, PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT JUNE 22, TREATS INTO-US RELATIONS CAUTIOUSLY AND NON-CONTROVERSIALLY; IT NOTES THE USA'S "GREAT UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION" OF THE PEACEFUL CHANGE OF INDIAN GOVERNMENTS AND MAKES NO REFERENCES TO DIEGO GARCIA, NUCLEAR MATTERS OR US ARMS POLICY TOWARD THE SUBCONTINENT. MANIFESTING THE DESAI GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN TO PRESERVE THE BENEFITS OF RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, THE REPORT CHARACTERIZES AS A "SIGNIFICANT FEATURE" OF INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS, CONTINUING FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 09055 01 OF 03 241654Z

SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THE SOVIET UNION. THE REPORT STATES THAT INDIA WORKED FOR THE "EXTENSION OF DETENTE IN ITS OWN REGION" BY TRYING TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH ALL ITS NEIGHBORS. IT HOPES THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AMBASSADORIAL TIES WITH CHINA WOULD LEAD TO IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS. IT CITES THE "SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT" OF RESUMED TIES WITH PAKISTAN AND THE HOPE OF THE NEW

INDIAN GOVERNMENT OF MAINTAINING AND PROMOTING FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN. REGARDING BANGLADESH, THE REPORT NOTES THAT INDIA CONTINUED EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS AND HOPES THAT AN ACCEPTABLE AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE FARAKKA PROBLEM CAN BE REACHED. THE THEME OF THE REPORT IS THE "ESSENTIAL CONTINUITY" OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. THE UNITED STATES: THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS FOR 1976-77 IN THE INTRODUCTORY SECTION BRIEFLY STATES THAT "INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES WERE MARKED BY A DIALOGUE AT VARIOUS LEVELS TO EXPLORE WAYS AND MEANS TO DEVELOP COOPERATION. THE UNITED STATES SHOWED GREAT UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE PEACEFUL CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT THROUGH DEMOCRATIC METHODS AS A RESULT OF A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION. IT WAS INDIA'S HOPE THAT RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES WOULD DEVELOP ON THE BASIS OF EQUALITY, UNDERSTANDING AND MUTUAL BENEFITS."

2. IN THE AMERICAS REGIONAL SECTION, THE REPORT STATES THAT INDIA FELT THAT THERE "WAS MUCH THE TWO COUNTRIES COULD DO TO STRENGTHEN PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION" AND THAT RELATIONS WERE MARKED BY A "COMMON DESIRE" TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL TIES, IMPROVE TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND EXCHANGE VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. IN A RATHER CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 09055 01 OF 03 241654Z

ODD FORMULATION, THE REPORT THEN STATED THAT "IT WAS HOPED IN VIEW OF THE TREND TOWARDS GLOBAL DETENTE INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS WOULD ALSO MOVE TOWARD A PHASE OF FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS BASED ON EQUALITY AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING." THE REPORT LISTS EXCHANGE OF HIGH LEVEL VISITS, THE MEETING OF THE JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL, AND INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE BICENTENNIAL OBSERVANCES. IT NOTES THAT PRESIDENT CARTER "SHOWED HIS GOODWILL TOWARD INDIA" BY SENDING A SPECIAL DELEGATION LED BY HIS MOTHER TO THE FUNERAL OF THE LATE INDIAN PRESIDENT. THE SECTION REFERS AGAIN TO THE "GREAT APPRECIATION" IN THE UNITED STATES OF PEACEFUL AND DEMOCRATIC CHANGE IN GOVERNMENTS AND NOTES THE CORDIAL EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND THE NEW PRIME MINISTER. INCONCLUDES WITH THE STATEMENT THAT "IT WAS EXPECTED THAT THERE WOULD BE GREATER SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES TO ENABLE THEM TO REESTABLISH THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS ON A FIRMER FOUNDATION."

3. IN THE CHAPTER ON TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION, THE REPORT REVIEWS THE VARIOUS JOINT COMMISSION MEETINGS. IT ALSO STATES THAT THERE WAS A "GROWING REALIZATION" IN THE

USA THAT INDIAN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ENGINEERING FIRMS CAN OFFER EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE TO US FIRMS EITHER IN JOINT VENTURES OR AS SUBCONTRACTORS. THE REPORT DOES COMPLAIN THAT "SEVERAL ITEMS OF INTEREST TO INDIA DID NOT FIND A PLACE IN THE GSP" AND THAT COTTON TEXTILE EXPORTS WERE HAMPERED BECAUSE OF QUOTAS AND TARIFF AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS.

4. THE SOVIET UNION: THE INTRODUCTION STATES THAT "A SIGNIFICANT FEATURE" OF INDIA'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS WAS THE "CONTINUING FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION" WITH THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THE USSR. "THESE RELATIONS FOUND SUSTENANCE FROM A SIMILARITY OF VIEWS ON MOST INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS AS WELL AS A TRADITION OF MUTUALLY...BENEFICIAL

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PAGE 04 NEW DE 09055 01 OF 03 241654Z

BILATERAL COOPERATION IN VARIOUS FIELDS OVER A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD." VARIOUS HIGH-LEVEL VISITS ARE MENTIONED AS REFLECTIVE OF THE "STRONG TIES OF FRIENDSHIP" BETWEEN INDIA AND THE SOVIET BLOC. THE VISIT OF SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO SOON AFTER THE NEW GOVERNMENT TOOK OFFICE "WAS OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE." THE AGREEMENTS SIGNED DURING THE VISIT AND THE JOINT

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 09055 02 OF 03 241645Z

ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 NEW DELHI 9055

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COMMUNIQUE ARE CALLED REFLECTIVE OF THE DESIRE OF THE TWO COUNTRIES TO FURTHER DEVELOP FRIENDSHIP AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION.

5. THE REGIONAL SECTION OF THE REPORT IS A STRAIGHTFORWARD REVIEW OF RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN 1976-77. THE IDEA OF FURTHER COOPERATION IS AGAIN MENTIONED AND THE DISCUSSIONS WITH GROMYKO SPECIFICALLY ARE SAID TO HAVE INDICATED A BROAD SIMILARITY OF VIEWS ON MOST INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS. THE VISITS OF SOME OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN DIGNITARIES ARE ALSO CHARACTERIZED AS "CONFIRMING CLOSE IDENTITY OR BROAD SIMILARITY OF VIEWS" ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. IN THE TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC CHAPTER THE SOVIET UNION IS MENTIONED IN THE JOINT COMMISSION SECTION, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 09055 02 OF 03 241645Z

BUT IT AND EASTERN EUROPE ARE OMITTED FROM THE SECTION DISCUSSING ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION.

6. CHINA: IN THE INTRODUCTION, CHINA IS DISCUSSED AS AN EXAMPLE OF INDIA'S EFFORTS TO EXTEND DETENTE TO ITS OWN REGION BY TRYING TO NORMALIZE AND IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH ALL ITS NEIGHBORS. THE REPORT NOTES THE INDIAN INITIATIVE TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH CHINA AND THE SUBSEQUENT RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC TIES AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL AND EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT THIS STEP WOULD LEAD TO THE "DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS." THE REGIONAL CHAPTER DETAILS THE STEPS LEADING TO THE EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS AND NOTES THAT AFTER THE 1976 CHINESE EARTHQUAKE INDIAN LEADERS SENT MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY AND AN OFFER OF ASSISTANCE WHICH WAS "GREATLY APPRECIATED BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT." THE REPORT STATES THAT A NON-OFFICIAL TRADE DELEGATION VISITED THE CANTON FAIR IN 1977 AND THAT PRELIMINARY AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED WHICH IT IS HOPED WILL LEAD TO "SOME SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS" IN RENEWING COMMERCIAL TIES.

7. PAKISTAN: THE REPORT CALLS THE CHANGE ACHIEVED IN INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS BY THE RESTORATION OF DIPLOMATIC, TRADE AND COMMUNICATION TIES A "SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT" AND NOTES THE FRIENDLY EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE LEADERS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND PAKISTAN AND THE DESAI ADMINISTRATION'S HOPE OF MAINTAINING AND PROMOTING FRIENDLY RELATIONS. IN THE REGIONAL CHAPTER, THE STEPS LEADING TO RENEWED TIES ARE GIVEN IN DETAIL,

FROM THE INDIAN VIEWPOINT BUT RELATIVELY OBJECTIVELY. THE REPORT STATES THAT THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION "BY AND LARGE WENT SMOOTHLY" AND WAS "WIDELY APPRECIATED INTERNATIONALLY." CRITICISM OF PAKISTAN IS RESERVED FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SECTION WHERE THE MEA RESTATES ITS OPPOSITION TO THE PAKISTANI-INTRODUCED RESOLUTIONS ON KASHMIR AND THE SOUTH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 09055 02 OF 03 241645Z

ASIAN NUCLEAR FREE ZONE.

8. BANGLADESH: EXPECTATIONS OF IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH ARE STATED IN THE INTRODUCTION WHICH NOTES THE ALMOST CONTINUOUS EXCHANGE OF VISITS ON THE QUESTION OF FARAKKA AND EXPRESSES INDIA'S HOPE THAT "THROUGH A SPIRIT OF SHARED SACRIFICE AND MUTUAL GOODWILL AND FRIENDSHIP, THIS PROBLEM WOULD LEND ITSELF TO AN ACCEPTABLE AND LASTING SOLUTION." IN THE REGIONAL CHAPTER, HOWEVER, THE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS SINCE DECEMBER 1975 STATES THAT RELATIONS REMAINED STRAINED BECAUSE OF "VARIOUS MISUNDERSTANDINGS" MOST OF WHICH RELATED TO THE FARAKKA PROBLEM. THE REVIEW OF FARAKKA NEGOTIATIONS WHILE RESTRAINED LEAVES THE IMPRESSION OF BANGLADESHI INTRANSIGENCE. THE REPORT ALSO DENIES THE ALLEGATIONS THAT INDIA WAS PROVIDING SANCTUARIES TO MISCREANTS AND ENCOURAGING THEM IN CROSS-BORDER SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES AND SAYS THE GOI "REPEATEDLY ASSURED BANGLADESH THAT IT WAS VITALLY INTERESTED IN THE SOVEREIGNTY, INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BANGLADESH AND HAD NO INTEREST IN PROMOTING INSTABILITY OR DISORDER IN THAT COUNTRY BECAUSE THAT WAS BOUND (SIC) TO SPILL OVER INTO INDIA." REGARDING THE MAY MEETING AT THE OFFICIAL LEVEL TO WORK OUT THE "UNDERSTANDING" PREVIOUSLY REACHED ON FARAKKA, THE REPORT STATES THAT "CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS WAS MADE IN WORKING OUT THE DETAILS OF A POSSIBLE SOLUTION" AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT FURTHER ROUNDS OF TALKS WILL LEAD TO A PERMANENT SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF ALLOCATING GANGA WATERS DURING THE LEAN SEASON AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

9. NEPAL: THE REPORT STATES THAT THERE WAS "A GREAT DEAL OF POSITIVE MOVEMENT" IN INDO-NEPALI RELATIONS AND DESCRIBES VARIOUS HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGES, PROGRESS ON WATER DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, AND THE STATUS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS. ON THE QUESTION OF TRAVEL OF NEPALIS INTO "PROTECTED/RESTRICTED" AREAS OF INDIA, THE REPORT STATES THAT THE GOI WISHED TO TREAT NEPALIS ON A PAR WITH OTHER FOREIGNERS BUT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 NEW DE 09055 02 OF 03 241645Z

TO ENSURE "BONA FIDE" NEPALI TRAVELLERS WERE NOT INCONVENIENCED, IT LAID DOWN "SIMPLE AND CONVENIENT" PERMIT PROCEDURES. THE REPORT EXPLAINS THE EXTENSION OF THE 1971 TRADE AND TRANSIT TREATY PENDING NEGOTIATION OF A NEW TREATY WAS INTENDED TO ENSURE THAT THE FLOW OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES TO NEPAL WAS NOT HINDERED AND THAT NEPALI TRANSIT TRADE WITH THIRD COUNTRIES DID NOT SUFFER.

10. OTHER COUNTRIES: THE REPORT'S REVIEWS OF RELATIONS WITH MOST OTHER COUNTRIES ARE CONSISTENT WITH PREVIOUS PUBLIC STATEMENTS. IT STRESSES, FOR INSTANCE, SUPPORT FOR ARAB STATES IN THE MIDDLE EAST, EMPHASIZES THE SIMILARITY OF VIEWS WITH THESE COUNTRIES ON MOST ISSUES, AND SAYS THAT THE "UNDERSTANDING SHOWN BY SOME OF THE OIL EXPORTING COUNTRIES OF THE PROBLEMS FACING A FRIENDLY COUNTRY

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 09055 03 OF 03 241700Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 NEW DELHI 9055

LIKE INDIA" HAS HELPED TO SOME EXTENT TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE OIL PRICE INCREASES ON THE INDIAN ECONOMY. IN THE AMERICAS CHAPTER, HOWEVER, THERE IS A VEILED REFERENCE TO THE UNITED STATES. THE REPORT STATES THAT THE TREND TOWARD EXPANDING RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND LATIN AND CARIBBEAN

COUNTRIES WAS UNDERLINED BY "NASCENT AWARENESS" IN LATIN AMERICA THAT ITS DESTINY LIES IN CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE DEVELOPING AND NON-ALIGNED WORLD AND THAT "INSPITE OF THE CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED BY LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMPULSIONS/ THE URGE FOR GRATER INDEPENDENCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE REGION CONTINUED TO BE WIDESPREAD. CANADA IS DEALTH WITH TERSELY. THE REPORT STATES THE "INDO-CANADIAN DIFFERENCES IN NUCLEAR COOPERATION" HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN DETAIL IN PREVIOUS YEARS AND THAT IN MARCH 1976 OFFICIALS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES REACHED AN "UNDERSTANDING ON ALL OUTSTANDIN ISSUES." CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 09055 03 OF 03 241700Z

HOWEVER, IT CONTINUES, IN MAY CANADA "UNILATERAL DECIDED TO TERMINATE" NUCLEAR COOPERATION "AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED INDIA'S REGRET" IN DETAIL TO THE PARLIAMENT.

11. ON THE INTERNATONAL SCENE, THE REPORT STATES THERE WERE IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS, BUT NO DRAMATIC CHANGES, IT NOTES THAT THE US ANDUSSR, "DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCES, CONTINUED TO REITERATE THEIR ADHERENCE TO THE SPIRIT OF DETENTE." ALTHOUGH THE SALT TALKS DID NOT "YIELD RUITFUL RESULTS," THE REPORT CONTINUES, AT LEAST "THERE WAS NO EMERGENCE OF A SITUATION RESULTING IN CONFRONTATION." IN AN APPARENT REFER- ENCE TO CHINA, THE REPORT STATES THAT "POLITICAL TRANSITION IN SOME OTHER IMPORTANT COUNTRIES INHIBITED ANY MAJOR INITIA- TIVE BY THEM AFFECTING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS." THE REPORT IS CRITICAL THAT THERE WAS NO EXTENSION OF DETENTE AND "CON- FLICTS CONTINUED TO SMOULDER IN SOME PARTS OF THE WORLD: E.G., THE MIDDLE EAST, SOUTHER AFRICA, CYPRUS, INDO-CHINA. ON THE INDIAN OCEAN, THE REPORT STATES THAT THE LITTORAL COUNTIRES DID NOT SUCCEED IN THEIR EFFORTS "TO REMOVE EXTERNAL INFLUENCE AND RIVALRIES FROM THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA." CONVINCED THAT " "DETENTE SHOULD NOT BE BE LIMITED TO ANY REGION AND ITS SCOPE SHOULD EXTEND TO AL PARTS OF THE WORLD," INDIA "OPPOSED THE ESCALATION OF FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BASES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN" AND SUPPORTED THE STAND THAT THE INDIAN OCEAN SHOULD BE A ZONE OF PEACE. ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES, THE REPORT REITERATES STANDARD INDIAN POSITIONS, ENDORSES AGAIN THE CON- CEPT OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER, AND EXPRESSES SOME DISAPPOINTMENT AT THE LACK OF PROGRESS AT VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC MEETINGS.

12. COMMENT: WHILE DULY NOTING THAT THE PEACEFUL CHANGE IN GOVERNMENTS HER HAD A FAVORABLE INTERNATIONAL IMPACT CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 09055 03 OF 03 241700Z

BY PROJECTING THE IMAGE OF "STRENGTH AND STABILITY BASED ON SOUND DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS," THE EMPHASIS IN THE MEA REPORT IS UPON "THE ESSENTIAL CONTINUITY" IN INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT. IN DISCUSSING SPECIFIC COUNTRIES OR ISSUES, DISTINCTIONS ARE SELDOM DRAWN BETWEEN THE ACTIONS OF THE GANDHI GOVERNMENT AND THE NEW REGIME. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE CASE OF BANGLADESH, WHERE THE DESAI ADMINISTRATION HAS MADE NOTABLE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS, THE REPORT DWELLS AT LENGTH ON THE BILATERAL PROBLEMS AND ONCE AGAIN REFUTES THE CHARGES OF THE INTERFERENCE MADE AGAINST THE GANDHI GOVERNMENT BY THE BANGLADESHIS. AS WAS EVIDENT DURING THE GROMYKO VISIT IN APRIL, THE GOI IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT SEEMS INTENT UPON DEMONSTRATING THE IMPORTANCE THE GOI ATTACHES TO MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE USSR. BILATERAL PROBLEMS IN THAT RELATIONSHIP ARE DEALT WITH BY THE EXPEDIENCY OF IGNORING THEM. THE REPORT ON RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES IS NOT ONLY BRIEFER BUT IS ALSO MORE CAUTIOUS IN ASSESSMENT. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE POTENTIAL FOR GREATER WARMTH IN INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, THE GOI IN THIS REPORT IS APPARENTLY NOT YET WILLING TO EXPRESS MORE THAN THE HOPE OF CLOSER TIES. GOHEEN

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